

MA addresses public affairs IMAs

Brig. Gen. Tim White

Mobilization assistant, director of public affairs

To the men and women of the mighty US Air Force Public Affairs Triad—

With due respects to Thomas Wolfe, you CAN go home again. Brig. Gen. Ron Rand has invited me home to Air Force PA, and I am honored to be his mobilization assistant.

After more than two decades as a PA IMA at the base, wing and SAF level, I have spent the last three years in recruiting — a wonderful experience that has given me an even greater appreciation for the role public affairs plays in accomplishing the mission of the Air Force.

Never has the need to tell the Air Force story been greater than it is today.

Never has the power of truthful, clear and vigorous communication been more in demand. And never has Air Force public affairs had so many highly skilled, dedicated professionals to join the battle. I look forward to working with the scores of PA IMAs who bring great skills from their civilian jobs to the fight. It is my intent to help the IMA program *become* even more

creative, robust, and valuable in support of the PA Triad.

Having been an IMA at many different levels, I know that there are special challenges you and I face. Part of my job is to better educate our active duty counterparts to ensure they are working with us on important issues.

These include identifying productive and worthwhile work to do while you are on duty; ensuring you are taken care of in your OPRs, PRFs and decorations so good people can get promoted and rewarded; and ensuring our IMA force has the necessary tools and training to step into the shoes of our active counterparts should they be deployed.

Whether in support of the global war on terrorism or meeting challenges we cannot yet imagine, PA IMAs will be ready to go!

Here's a little sidebar on the issue of meaningful work while you are in duty status. No doubt you have heard the old



White

saw "Remember that IMA starts with I."

That has never been more true than it is today. Make it part of your job to identify and suggest things that need to be done and that you can help accomplish. For successful IMAs, the "I" also stands for initiative.

In addition to the daily challenges of public affairs, I am excited about working with our broadcasters and photogra-

phers. My long career in the television business gives me a close identification with the fine work of our broadcasters and I am committed to *sustaining* and improving that fine tradition of service.

I am honored and humbled to be selected as the Mobilization Assistant to SAF/PA. The leadership of Brig. Gen. Mark Rosenker, and Brig. Gen. Jim Hart before him, has set the bar for the MA high indeed. I will do my best to live up to those high standards. I look forward to working with each and every one of you in the years ahead.

Bill appropriates nearly \$3.4 billion for AF Reserve

WASHINGTON – Air Force Reserve Command will receive \$3.4 billion to operate and man the air reserve component, a \$300 million increase from last year.

President George W. Bush signed the fiscal year 2003 Department of Defense Appropriations Act into law Oct. 23 during a White House ceremony. The bill allocates \$355 billion to all of DOD, \$37 billion more than last year.

During the ceremony, the president also signed the \$10.5 billion FY 2003 Military Construction Appropriations Act, which includes \$67.2 million for AFRC programs.

The president noted the security of the

American people is the first commitment of the American government.

"Our nation faces grave new dangers, and our nation must fully support the men and women of our military who confront these dangers on our behalf," Bush said.

AFRC appropriations for the fiscal year ending Sept. 30, 2003, permits a Selected Reserve end strength of 75,600 – 61,196 drilling reservists, 12,906 individual mobilization augmentees, and a full-time Active Guard and Reserve cadre of 1,498 members.

This year's Defense Appropriations Act calls for a full-time air reserve technician

force of 9,911, an increase of 93 ARTs compared to last year.

Under the reserve personnel appropriation, the Air Force Reserve receives nearly \$1.2 billion to cover pay, allowances, clothing, subsistence, travel and other related expenses. This year's RPA funds a pay hike of 4.1 percent for military personnel. Last year's RPA budget called for \$1.061 billion for the Reserve.

Another \$2.2 billion goes to operation and maintenance funding to train, organize and administer the command.

For the full story, see the AFRC Web site at www.afrc.af.mil/news/afrcnews.

Briefs

Service dress nametag returns

WASHINGTON (AFPN) — The Air Force's service dress uniform welcomed back an old friend Oct. 1: the nametag.

The new service dress nametag has a brushed satin finish and blue letters. It is slightly larger and heavier than the blue plastic nametag worn on the blue shirt and medical white uniform.

It will only feature the wearer's last name and will only be worn on the service dress, on the right side parallel to the ribbons and medals.

The nametags will be available at military clothing sales stores at a future date.

Air Force has unsafe year

Fiscal year '02 was one of the worst years in recent history for off-duty safety in the Air Force. An Air Force Safety Center review of fatal mishaps shows a 38 percent increase in fatalities.

Good judgment can prevent most mishaps and save lives.

Commanders, supervisors and peers must focus on identifying and acting to change risky behaviors like:

- ♦Taking unnecessary risks;
- ♦Speeding;
- ♦Driving under the influence of alcohol; and
- ♦Failing to use proper safety equipment, like helmets and seat belts. (Courtesy U.S. Air Force Aim Points, Oct. 21)

TSP holds open season

AIR FORCE PERSONNEL CENTER -- Civilian and military employees can sign up for or change current Thrift Savings Plan, or TSP, accounts during the open season that runs through Dec. 31.

"TSP is an easy, long-term retirement savings plan, that everyone should consider," said Maj. Alessandra Stokstad, chief of the contact center here.

"It's a great supplement to military and civilian retirement plans," Stokstad said. "It's important to note that TSP is not limited to investing in stocks. People can choose safer government securities as well."

Investment money is deposited directly from each paycheck.

More information is available on the TSP Web site at <http://www.tsp.gov/> or by

calling the AFPC Contact Center at DSN 665-5000 or commercial (866) 229-7074.

'CINC' is sunk

WASHINGTON (AFPN) — The term "CINC" is sunk.

Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld put out a memo Oct. 24 to Department of Defense leaders saying there is only one commander in chief in America — the president.

His memo also forbids use of the acronym "CINC" (pronounced "sink") with titles for military officers.

The title of commander in chief is enshrined in the U.S. Constitution. Article II, Section 2, states, "The President shall be Commander in Chief of the Army and Navy of the United States, and of the Militia of the several States, when called into the actual Service of the United States."

No more. Rumsfeld has been using the term "combatant commander" for months now when referring to a regional organization such as the U.S. Central Command and "commander" when talking about a specified unit such as the U.S. Strategic Command.

Troops to Teachers helps alleviate shortage

To help alleviate what could be the nation's worst teacher shortage, the Troops to Teachers program expanded in January to include reservists.

Under the program, the U.S. Department of Education and the Department of Defense team up to help qualified service members transition from the military to rewarding teaching careers.

Participants must have a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution or have one year of college with six years experience in a vocational or technical field. Reservists qualify under four different options:

♦Retired from the drilling reserve, such as Air Force Reserve Command, with 20 or more years on or after Oct. 1, 1999; must apply for the program within four years of retirement.

♦Now serving in the drilling reserve with 10 or more years of creditable service and commit to serving an additional three years or until eligible for retirement.

♦Retired or separated from the drilling reserve due to a physical disability on or after Jan. 8, 2002; must apply within four years of separation.

♦Transitioning from active duty on or after Jan. 8, 2002, with six or more years of active duty immediately before separation and a commitment to serve three years with a drilling

reserve unit; must apply within four years of separation.

Interested members can access the Troops to Teachers Web site at www.ProudToServeAgain.com for more information. (Courtesy AFRC Commander's Call Topics for November 2002)



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Needs determine who gets anthrax shots

By Kenny Pruitt

Air Force Reserve Command Public Affairs

ROBINS AIR FORCE BASE, Ga. - Unless deployed to a high-threat area for more than 15 days, most Air Force reservists can expect to keep their sleeves rolled down after the Air Force distributed its anthrax implementation plan to commanders Oct. 11.

In a June 28 memorandum, Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz said active-duty people and emergency-essential Department of Defense civilians, as well as members of reserve components who are deployed for more than 15 days to high-threat areas will be immunized.

In early 1998, BioPort, the only company making the vaccine, closed its facility for renovation. With the halt in production, supplies of the vaccine dwindled, and by 2000 the military had extensively slowed its vaccination program.

"It is important that all people whose duties are essential to mission-critical capabilities are vaccinated against anthrax for their personal protection and for success of the military mission," said CMSgt. Susan Glenn, individual mobilization augmentee to the director of medicine in the Pentagon's Office of the Air Force Reserve. "Immunizations will begin with designated special mission units and people involved in research and anthrax vaccine manufacturing."

U.S. intelligence agencies are keeping track of the locations where anthrax could or would be used as a biological war. Vaccinations will be mandatory for people in those high-threat areas if they are there for more than 15 consecutive days, except for those medically or administratively exempt, Glenn said.

Higher-threat areas include countries primarily in South-

west Asia, said Maj. Linda Bonnel of the Air Force Medical Operations Agency.

Full immunization with anthrax vaccine requires six doses administered over 18 months to complete the primary series. After the initial dose, shots are given at two weeks, four weeks, six months, 12 months and 18 months.

"There is no minimum number of shots required before deploying. Depending on the amount of time from notification to actual deployment, members would receive as many shots as possible," Glenn said. "Vaccine is or will be available at all forward deployed locations."

As for reservists who previously received vaccinations but didn't complete the series, Glenn said they will resume the immunization with the next shot in the series. For example, if a member received shot number three in January 1999, the individual will continue the series with shot number four.

"If approved by their commander, an administrative exemption may be applicable for those retiring or separating within 180 days," Glenn said. "The exemption will not apply to personnel who the commander determines will receive the vaccine because of overriding mission requirements."

When reservists separate from the military before completion of the anthrax vaccine series, their vaccinations will cease. However, if recalled to military service, people who have not completed the vaccination series will continue the schedule with administration of the next dose in the series or booster.

Since the beginning of the Anthrax Vaccine Immunization Program in March 1998, DOD has vaccinated more than 525,000 people with more than 2.1 million doses of anthrax vaccine. (Courtesy AFRC News Service)

USERRA laws protect civilian jobs

Reservists called to active duty in support of America's war on terrorism want and deserve assurance that they can return to their civilian job.

To help them, Congress passed the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act, or USERRA, in 1994 to keep reservists out of the unemployment line after their military service commitment ends.

Under USERRA, reservists can protect their civilian job if they go on active duty, voluntarily or involuntarily, by meeting certain eligibility requirements. Those provisions include:

- Holding a civilian job with some reasonable expectation for continued employment;
- Giving notice to the employer that he or she will be leaving the job for service in the uniformed services, including reserve component training;
- Being released from military service under honorable conditions;
- Not exceeding the five-year cumulative limit on periods of military service; and
- Applying for reemployment in a timely manner.

People can learn more about the USERRA laws by going to the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve's Web site - www.esgr.com or calling the toll-free number 1-800-336-4590. (Courtesy AFRC Commander's Call Topics for November 2002)

Airmen need AEF mindset

To adopt the Air and Space Expeditionary Force, or AEF, mindset, all airmen must understand the natural state of the Air Force is deployed operations.

When the 90-day vulnerability window begins, the people in that AEF force package must already be trained, packed, administered and either deployed or expecting to be. There should be no surprises when the phone rings and no excuses for being unprepared.

An expeditionary mindset across the Air Force is fundamental to the success of the AEF to meet the challenges of a rapidly changing world.

More AEF news is available at the AEF Center Web site at <http://aefc.langley.af.mil>. (Courtesy U.S. Air Force Aim Points, Aug. 8)